

W. H. Walker about - Basingstoke

"There is no pleasure in travelling, except on horseback, or on foot."
Correct.

Travelling Hampshire by the South-Western Railway. The first town of importance you come to is Basingstoke, where the traveller may settle himself for a week or two in the pleasant hope of finding a walk of much interest for every day.

The country to the north of the Basingstoke Canal - still remarkably unimproved, being within the London Basin; but, far out of the valley & meadows on either hand, the eye is impressed with the diversity which is the charm of Hampshire scenery. At one moment,

the eye rests on sweeps of shimmering corn, shut in by brown-tinted hedges, & beyond these, more flowing fields, until the openings framed by the hedges reveal only a sea of blue haze. But turn your head, & you have a wild heather waste, not far distant "household bread or fattest steers," but the life is more than meat; - the bright sounds & odours of these Hampshire heaths, the air that blows upon them, are pure life & nothing less.

There is no reason for lingering at Basingstoke; but there is another, you are in the heart of the neighbourhood rich in associations, historical & personal; from here, you easily get at help-dogon places you have read of all your life with a longing to see them; & you come across them, with delightful histories, of which you have never even heard.

121 p 3 enc 24 3

with overhanging stories. Some ~~two~~ centuries ago,
these ancient houses brought Basingstoke into
disrepute. In 1609, the Grand Duke of Muscovy, ^(the Duke) Cosmo II,
made a 'grand tour' which included England, bringing
with him a secretary to write down his impressions
& an artist to illustrate them. The famous building
showed him as here yet. These brought him to
Basingstoke; he ate down the houses as poor, being
partly of wood, & objects to the projecting stories: but indeed
that a European prince, used to the massive
chateaux of his own land, should think
our domestic architecture poor & plain is hardly
matter for surprise.

The fine parish church is dedicated to St. Michael & all
Angels - an unusual dedication for a church not
set on a hill, accounted for by the fact that this
St. Michael was attached to the famous monastery
of St. Michael in Normandy. The glass of the east
window in the north aisle has a tale attached to it.
After Basingstoke was taken by Henry II & his
have suffered during the Civil War; the walls of the
church, especially on the south side, have been well
repaired, by which aid does not appear; but the
Parliamentarians are fully credited with all such work
of grace.

The Rectory, with pleasant grounds & many which the
London flower - the "Sweet-natured Cream" of Thomas
Warton, the younger, is not without distinction. The

elder Thomas Warton (1713) one of the most famous actors,
during his career of thirty years, before he began his more
famous work; & John of Basingstoke (1742), the last of the best of constables,
was among the first to introduce fresh learning into England.

Notwithstanding its antiquity, ^{L21P4 CMC 34} Basingstoke hardly had
much of English history, except - as being in the near
neighbourhood of Basing House at the time of the celebrated
siege. One Elias Archer ⁱⁿ gives a "True Relation" (1643)
mentions the present occupation of the town by
the Royal Troops, ^{tells} how the troops of the Parliament requested
themselves there, "in respect of the extremity of hard
service & cold weather."

How did the town folk of Basingstoke regard this
coming & going of the troops. what the mother of the war?
Here is a letter which tells what we want to know - printed
here by Canon Miller's kind permission. — *

the kindness of the Rev. Thomas Well known as an

* The writer owes much to Canon Miller's ~~kindness~~
archaeological ^{ed} accomplishments. The following
sketch of the history of the Long Shot Chapel is an
unworthy reproduction of a most interesting & charming verbal
account given on the spot.

62. p. 50. m. 1

This pamphlet is weighted with a little seven lines
long, beginning, "Good News from South-
Ampten And Basingstoke in Hampshire. As it is related
in a letter from thence by one Master Zote, to
a Merchant of good quality, in Lombard Street,
with pulley as much more.

Basingstoke his tenth day of December
1642.

4/2
Sir Here say my Lord Fendersons troope of Horse
And Colonell Greys Dragoones eleven dayes:
we had imploiment enough to dress the meat
& provide drinks for them, but last Friday they
went away, & as we heard, are gone to Marlborough,
& many say they heard the Guns go off very heavily.

The KING was expected here in this Towne
this day: here were many Gentlemen came thirty
miles to meete him, but returned presently
hearing the contrary. It hath bene a great charge
to our Towne, they demanded two thousand
yards of wollen cloth, & five hundred yards of
linnen, at fourteen pence the yard. Both
linnen Drapers bought their in, but the clothiers
& wollen Drapers made no great heede, so they served
themselves some at one shop, & a greater quantity
at another.

My son see Master Lenny, lett him be saved his
purse in going away, but they made hold with
his horse, he may come down safely now, & see
what is done: pray God send peace, or else see
what will come to this land quickly. Shope you
at London desire peace, as well as we, though perhaps
you are not so much in danger as we are, yet enough.
I believe you are not quite out yet: so thus with
my love best yours, H. W.

21pocm24

The Holy Ghost Chapel.

Working on way by means of steps up to chald
down crowned by that picturesque ruin which is the
ruined, of Bacrysto, we find ourselves upon
the Liten -

"A name which it has for ages,
A thousand years hath it borne that name,
And shall for a thousand more; -
For the Liten is a very ancient burying ground,
(A. S. lith, a corpse, as in 'lyth-gate'). When it is said
that seven kings were buried: there is a tradition that
on one occasion, seven kings were here together - come,
perhaps, to the burying of a Bretwalda.
Now is another instance of the pleasing continuity
of things in Bacrysto: of all modern innovations
belonging to towns, the cemetery is usually the
rarest; most modern; its very raison d'être
is, in most cases, that the parish churchyard will
hold none: but, here, the cemetery is an
extension of the ancient Liten, a burying
place a thousand years ago. Even here, however,
there is something to be forgiven to modern
taste; why need such pairs of extraordinary
black & white chapels have been run up under
the very shadow of ruin full of dignity &
grace? Nevertheless, this is a quiet, sweet
resting place, a little of the week-day
air of a cemetery, where the crumbling
head-stones of the Liten to link the mound
not yet grass-grown with the former generations.
From